

# Ham and Eggs in the 21st Century?

## *California's Lessons for the Retirement of the Baby Boom*

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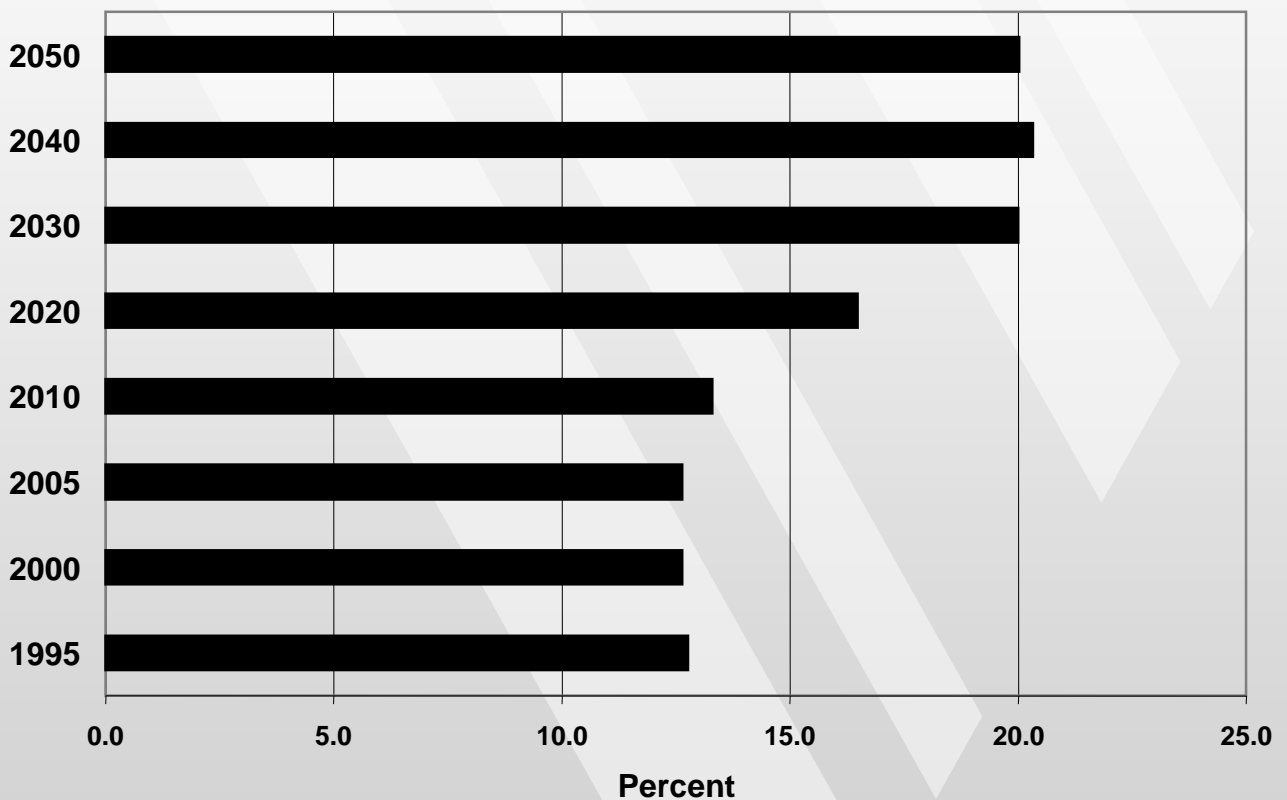
UCLA



# The boomers are coming!

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**Percent of U.S. Population 65 and Over: Middle Projection**



# The **BIG** Question:

*What happens  
when you have lots  
of elderly people  
who aren't getting  
what they hoped to  
get?*

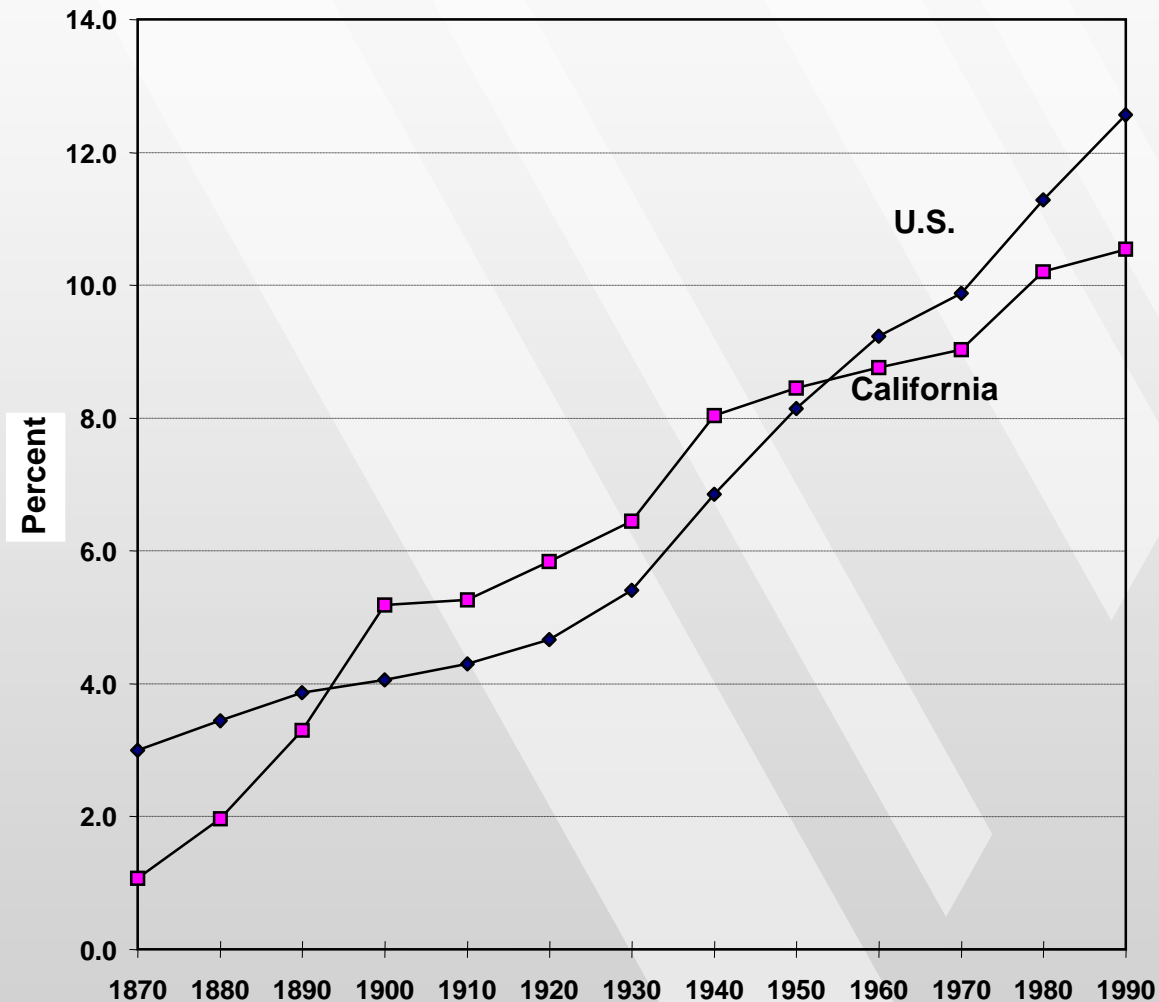


*Why  
Look  
at  
California, the  
youth state?*



# California's Demographic Past

Percent Aged 65 and Over: U.S. vs. California



# California: 1920s Characteristics

- A demographic Florida
- Concentrated population
- Direct democracy
- Limited old age support



# **FOE as Friend**

**Of the California elderly  
population 70+ years**



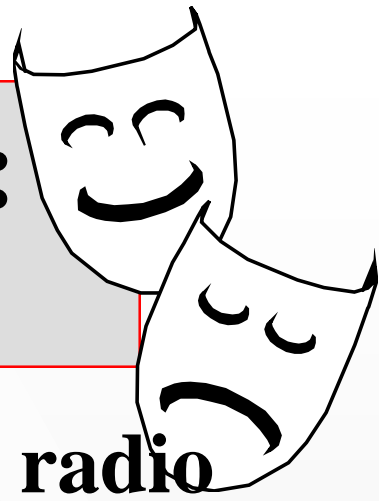
**Act of 1929 mandates “outdoor  
relief” with state subsidy to the  
counties.**

# ***Dr. Francis Townsend***





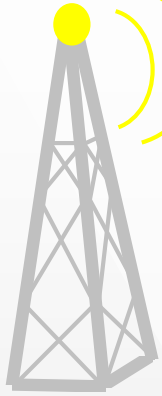
# Ham and Eggs: *The Cast*



- **Robert Noble**: Creator, radio broadcaster, follower of Huey Long, critic of mayor, later seditionist

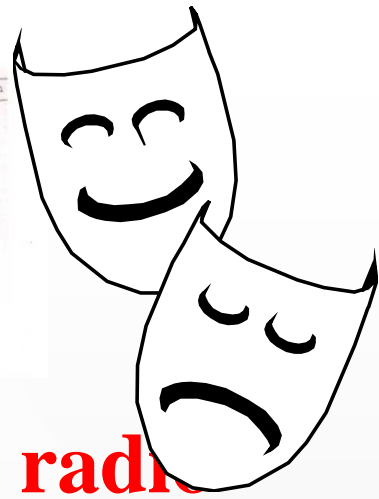


- **Willis and Lawrence Allen**: Con-men *extraordinaires*, hair tonic promoters, would-be Mexican radio station owners, forgers, owners of Cinema Advertising Agency



# *Radio!*





- **Robert Noble: Creator, radio broadcaster, follower of Huey Long, critic of mayor, later secessionist**
- **Willis and Lawrence Allen: Con-men *extraordinaire*, hair tonic promoters, would-be Mexican radio station owners, forgers, owners of Cinema Advertising Agency**
- **Capt. Earle Kynette of the LAPD: Maker of offers that couldn't be refused, head of the Red Squad, car bomber**



14. Led by Robert Noble, picketers descend on State Capitol in Sacramento to threaten Governor Olson with a recall movement if he does not have pension laws enacted. Olson was making his inaugural address at the time.

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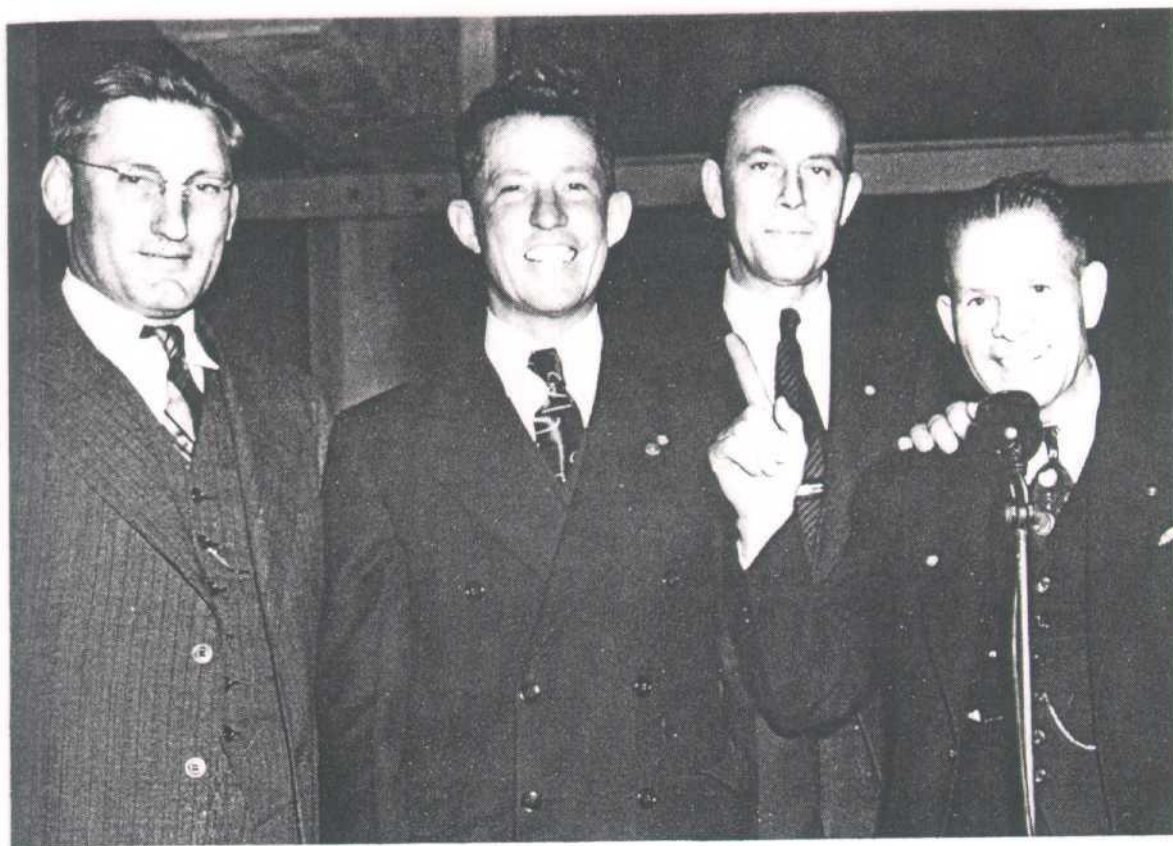
GRAND JUI  
*Entrance*







16. (Left to right) Roy G. Owens, Willis Allen, and Will H. Kindig in their main Los Angeles campaign headquarters on the night of November 6, 1939, the eve of the election in which their "\$30-Every-Thursdays" plan was rejected by California voters



15. At Los Angeles Shrine Auditorium, November 5, 1939: (left to right) Lt. Gov. Ellis Patterson, with Lawrence W. Allen, Roy G. Owens, and William R. Peeler of the Ham and Eggs movement



- **Sherman Bainbridge: Radio voice of Ham and Eggs, one time promoter of “Plenocracy”**
- **Roy Owens: “Engineer-economist” of Ham and Eggs, past legislation drafter for Father Divine**
- **Gertrude Coogan: Monetary conspiracy theorist and spokesperson for Ham and Eggs, prior economic advisor to radio priest Father Charles Coughlin**
- **George McLain: LA campaign manager for Ham and Eggs, later head of his own movement**



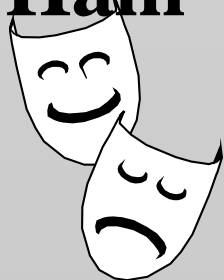




George McLain, Chairman, Board of Directors, California Institute of Social Welfare.

# *Political Figures*

- ❑ **Sheridan Downey**: Running mate with Upton Sinclair in EPIC campaign, endorser of Townsend Plan and Ham and Eggs, elected Democratic U.S. Senator (1938)
- ❑ **Frank Merriam**: Incumbent Republican governor who defeated the EPIC campaign (1934), endorser of Townsend Plan, lost to Culbert Olson (1938)
- ❑ **Culbert Olson**: former free silver advocate, defeated Merriam for Governor (1938), waffled on Ham and Eggs





1. Upton Sinclair at work on copy for *EPIC News*, September 1934



2. Sheridan Downey, Sinclair's running mate



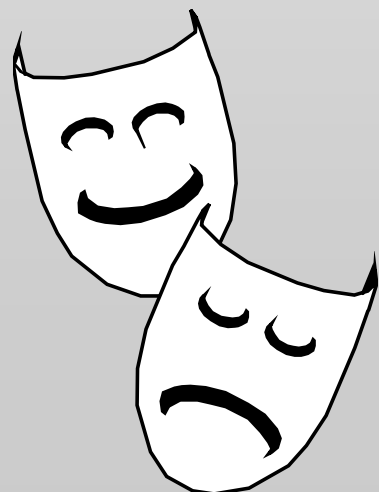


8. Gov. Frank E. Merriam (right) joining Townsend to help open the Townsend Plan's third annual convention. Held in the Los Angeles Coliseum June 20-23, 1938, the convention was attended by some 20,000 persons from all over the country.



12. Culbert L. Olson being sworn in as Governor, January 2, 1939

- **Earl Warren: Ambitious Republican, drew public support for locking up the California Japanese community, cut deal with Ham and Eggs, defeated Olson for governor (1942), later VP candidate with Thomas Dewey (1948), Supreme Court chief justice, chaired Warren Commission on JFK assassination**



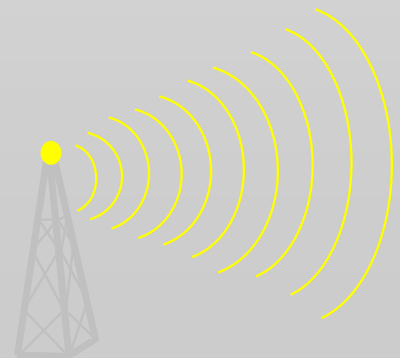
# *The Noble Vision*

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- ✓ **Every California citizen over 50 who did not work would get “\$25 Every Monday” (later “\$30 Every Thursday”)**
  - ✓ **Primary source of finance: Fisherian stamp money (“warrants”) to be issued by the state. Each dollar of warrants would require a weekly 2 cent stamp**
- 
- ✓ **Roy Owens to be in charge**
  - ✓ **On the state ballot in 1938 and 1939**

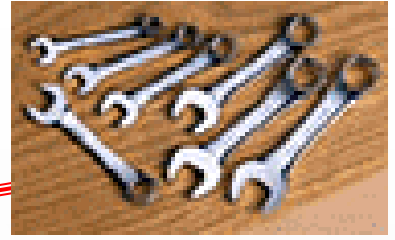


**Irving  
Fisher**

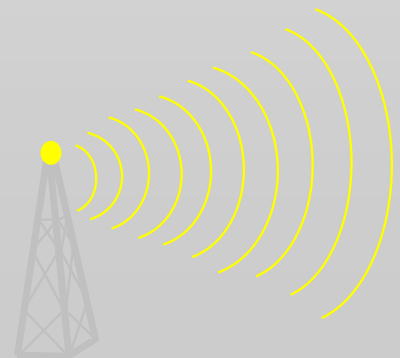


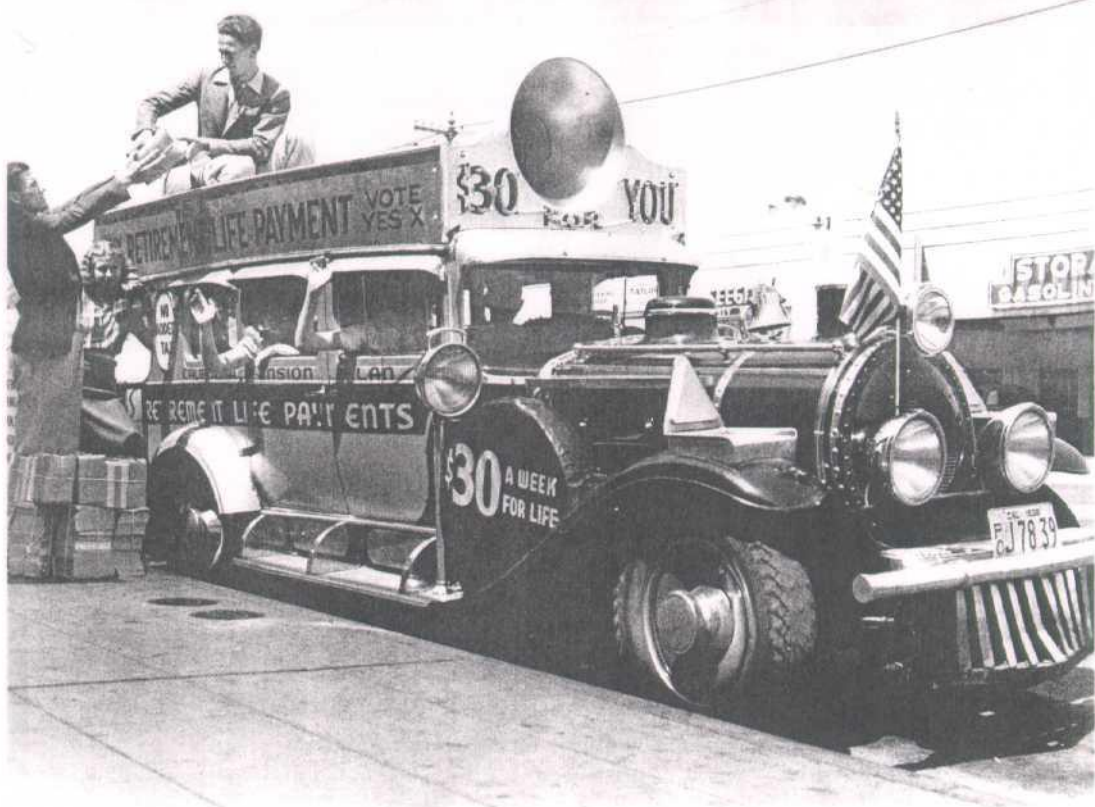


# *The Allen Wrench*



- ◆ **The Allens join with Noble**
- ◆ **The Mexican radio station  
(Foghorn Murphy affair)**
- ◆ **The forged letter**
- ◆ **Enter Capt. Kynette**
- ◆ **The coup**
- ◆ **The new voice of Bainbridge**
- ◆ **The martyr**
- ◆ **Coogan and others arrive**
- ◆ **The labor alliance**





Ham and Eggs sound truck, July, 1938. Courtesy, UPI/Corbis-Bettman.

# ◆ The Big Bang



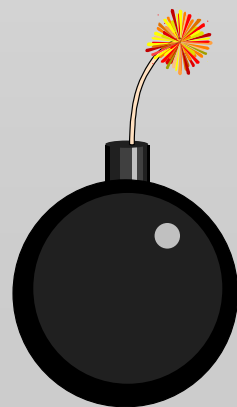
Clifford Clifton examines Harry Raymond's bombed-out car in 1938. (Hearst Collection, USC Library)

*“Who did it, Harry?”*

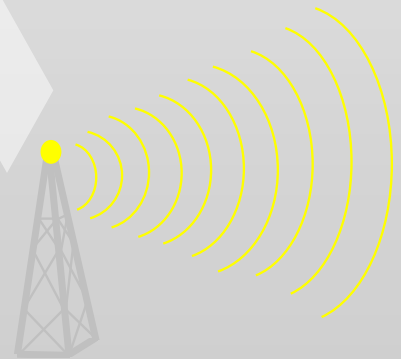
*“That son of a bitch Earle Kynette... I want you to promise you’ll get him for me.”*

*“I’ll get him for you, Harry.”*

*“They told me they would get me. They put Kynette on me. ...Kynette takes his orders from City Hall and they wanted me out of the way. He’s the one who rigged the bomb.”*



- **The cheated partner**
- **The failed coup**
- **The 1938 election**
- **Round 2**
- **Owen's bank means Coogan walks**
- **Olson waffles**
- **Olson's betrayal**
- **The 1939 election**
- **The failed recall**
- **OAA in California**
- **Olson endorses 60-60**
- **The Warren alliance**
- **Anointing George McLain**









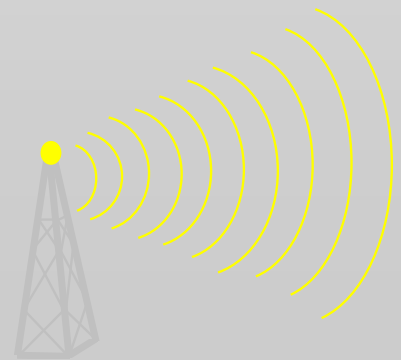






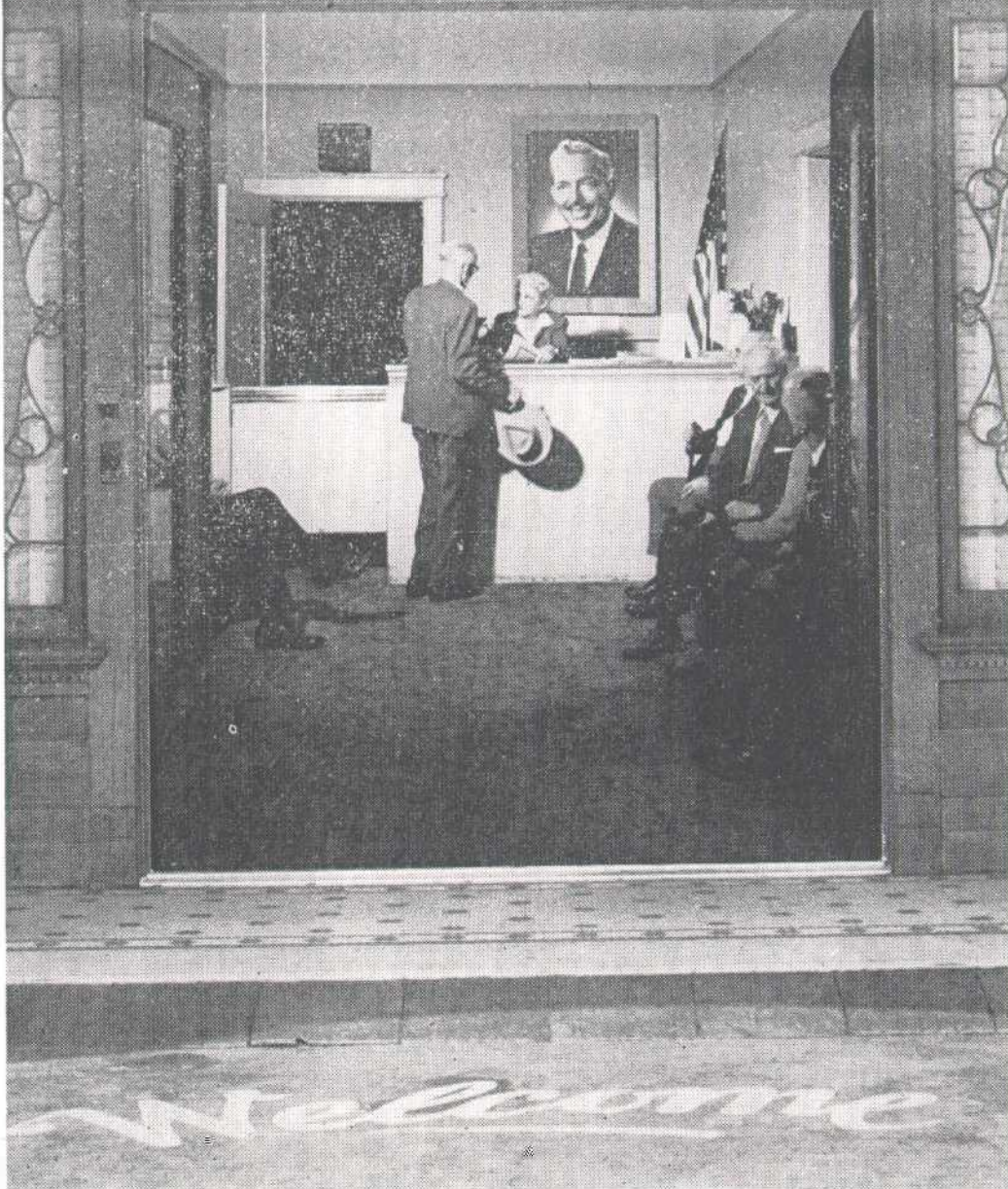
# ***“Uncle George” Takes Over***

- ❁ **California Institute for Social Welfare**
- ❁ **1948: Myrtle Williams, state welfare czar**
- ❁ **Legislative investigation**
- ❁ **1949: The empire strikes back**
- ❁ **California finally consumes its Ham and Eggs**



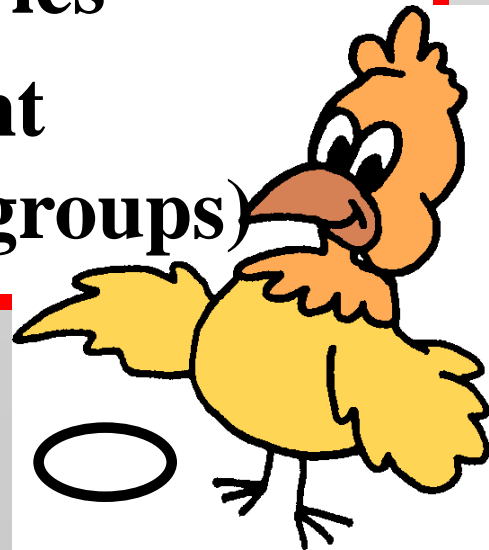
"THRU THESE PORTALS PASS THE BUILDERS OF A NATION... THEY SHALL NOT BE FORGOTTEN"....

1031



# ***What Came First?***

- ♦ **Prior pension schemes**
- ♦ **Monetary, currency, and banking theories and conspiracies**
- ♦ **Underconsumption, income distribution, and planning theories**
- ♦ **Work-spreading theories**
- ♦ **Promoting government payments (to worthy groups)**





# *The New Deal*

## ■ Monetarism

- Change in gold price
- Fiddling with silver
- Bank regulation

## ■ Underconsumptionism

- N.I.R.A.
- Minimum wage
- Wagner Act

## ■ Work spreading

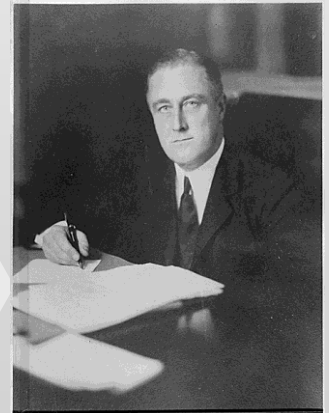
- Overtime
- Anti child labor

## ■ Government payments

- Welfare
- Unemployment compensation

## ■ Pensions

- Social Security
- Old Age Assistance



# ***Lessons for Future***

## **Ham & Eggs Era**

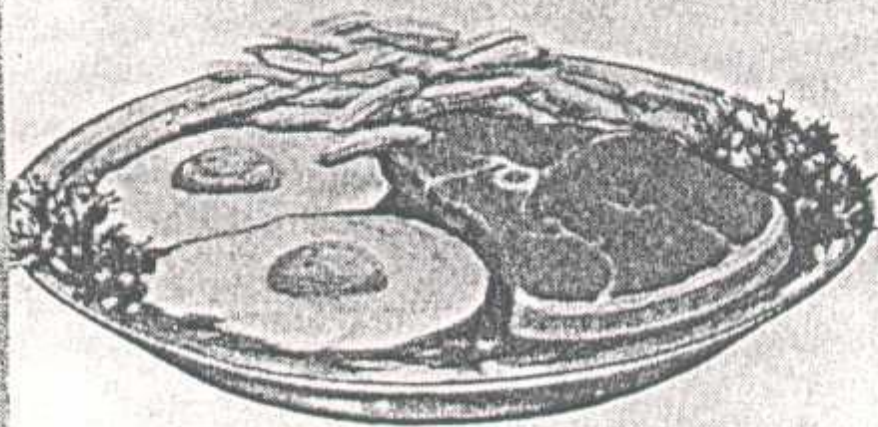
- **Demography shifts toward elderly**
- **Elderly frustrations over failure of society to provide adequate support**
- **Presence of political entrepreneurs**

## **21st Century**

- **Demography shifts toward elderly**
- **Probably, but will depend on economic circumstances and wisdom of reforms adopted**
- **Count on it**



# *Ham and Eggs*



FOR CALIFORNIANS